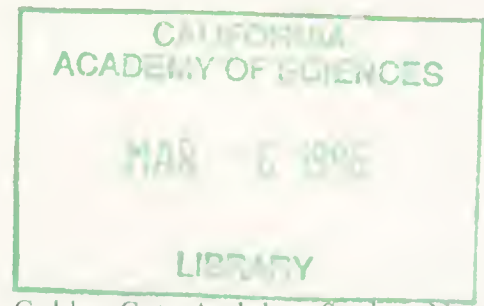




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Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter
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The Gull

Natural Connections: Protecting the Isthmus of Panama

by Dan Evans, Executive Director, Point Reyes Bird Observatory

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Nearly 2 years ago, GGAS's Panama Committee took shape. This issue of *The Gull* is devoted to a series of reports on past and future activities of the committee. It has much to be proud of.

S pellbound, I looked skyward at the steadily moving band, 50 birds wide, that stretched from one horizon to the other. I was witnessing an awesome display of the wonders of migration. A river of Swainson's Hawks flowed south, forming a natural connection between North and South America. Standing in Panama provided an ideal vantage point to experience migration, because there the two continents funnel to their narrowest width. Raptors reach such concentrations over the isthmus due to their aversion to open water, preferring to exploit thermal updrafts. These rising currents help raptors conserve energy as they cover up to 12,000 miles in their annual trek.

I was in Panama last October at the invitation of the Panama Audubon Society and their President, Norita Scott-Pezet, to give the keynote address at the Third Annual International Bird Festival. My goal was to imbue in Panamanians a greater appreciation for birds and to encourage their national conservation efforts. In my talk, I cited examples of how habitat loss and fragmentation have reduced bird populations throughout the hemisphere. I also stressed various economic factors that have tied some of Panama's richest forests to the Panama Canal. Other speakers highlighted Panama's wonderful birds - over 900 species in a country only slightly larger than California's Central Valley. On the second day, a series of technical talks informed people about the many development projects threatening forests throughout the country.

The challenge facing Panama - how to protect the habitat that supports such abundance and variety of birds - is common to other Latin countries. In Panama, though, our own government currently is responsible for a large tract of prime habitat along the Panama Canal. The future of this forest is as uncertain as the future of the canal itself. As the canal and surrounding land are gradu-

ally turned over to Panama, subsistence farmers will rapidly clear the forests. This has already occurred in other areas of the watershed, and the impact is alarming. Wildlife diversity and rainfall plummet as the forest is razed. The canal, which provides some \$400 million in revenues annually, requires abundant rainfall in order to stay open as a waterway. While Panama has a national interest in protecting the watershed, there's a risk that short-term political pressures may prevail.

PRBO is working with ANCON (the National Association for the Conservation of Nature) to document the avifauna in protected forests along the canal. Through the initiative of PRBO's founding board member, Dr. C. John Ralph of the U.S. Forest Service, PRBO, and ANCON are working with The Nature Conservancy to conduct intensive wildlife inventories and a Rapid Ecological Assessment on Department of Defense-managed lands totalling 75,000 acres. This baseline study is required to assess the impact of any future changes in this now-protected forest.

Birding the forest tracts along the canal brings home the diversity of resident species. On Sunday of the Festival weekend, I made a dusk foray with Dr. Dodge Engleman, Lorna Engleman, and Dan George, some of Panama's top birders. As the sun set along the canal we saw a Bat Falcon and a Gray Hawk, but the most spectacular birds appeared under spotlight - a Striped Owl and numerous Common Potoos and nightjars. Earlier in the day, I had joined over 200 Audubon members for their field trips. Boat-billed Herons stalked on a small pond; ten Red-lored Amazon Parrots let us follow them from tree to tree; I never tired of watching the common Wattled Jacanas stride the marshes, though the locals hardly noticed them. We all took in the wonder of a thousand Swainson's Hawks migrating overhead.

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GGAS Panama Committee

The Panama Committee was organized 2 years ago in response to the National Audubon Society's "Birds in the Balance" program. We have been working steadily to develop a strong relationship between GGAS and Panama Audubon Society. An important step occurred last November when we spent 7 days birding in Panama and had several valuable opportunities to meet and visit with PAS members.

PAS is a group of enthusiastic, concerned people. It wants everyone in their country to know about the wonderful diversity of bird life around them, and to help protect it. And, supporting PAS helps us. Neotropical migrants (the birds that breed here in the summer, but migrate south for the winter) spend most of their year in places like Panama. If birds lose that habitat, their survival there--and here--is in serious doubt! One of the biggest challenges now facing PAS is to be an effective environmental voice in determining the future use of vast Panama Canal lands. Will business and political interests completely overwhelm environmental considerations? The transfer will be completed in 1999. It is a unique opportunity to shape the future.

PAS organizes many bird trips throughout the year; provides binoculars and field guides to villages and groups which will assist in bird projects; and fights destructive land-use plans. It has major responsibility for the annual October Festival, Mundial de las Aves (it drew 1500 last year), which is used to educate the public (children and adults) on the value of the environment for the future health of Panama. GGAS sponsored Dan Evans, director of PRBO, as the main speaker last year. (He will report at the May GGAS meeting on his experience.) PAS consistently produces the highest Christmas bird count in the Americas! Over 25 years old, the Society is moving from a predominantly English-speaking group to Spanish-speaking. Ridgely's *Birds of Panama* contains a section on where to bird in Panama written by Dodge and Lorna Engelman, active members of the chapter. Dodge, from

Kansas, and Lorna, a native of Panama, reflect the chapter's wonderful diversity and committed talent.

By and large, schools and the media in Panama have little or no interest in environmental problems. PAS believes it is crucial to step into that void to do what it can to fill a huge need. We are looking for English/Spanish curriculum material to help them and would like to establish bonds between classrooms in our two countries.

We sponsor birding trips to Panama. The next will be February 1 to 16, 1997, offering an opportunity to see many special birds (297 species in Nov.) as well as to visit with PAS members to learn more about them and their country. Those meetings were a highlight of our trip in November!

We need your help -- to work on organizing these trips, to explore appropriate educational programs, to collect binoculars and field guides, to help with environmental issues (we provide important pressure from the US), to participate in birdathons to raise money (we have no budget), and to offer general support. There are many things to do. Join us! Phone me at 510-652-5854.

Miles McKey

Panama Committee - Education Report

The Committee has discussed some ambitious ideas for assisting Panama Audubon through educational projects. We are exploring ways of obtaining materials at minimal cost, but the purchase of books and educational materials can require significant resources, so we're looking for donations as well as imaginative ways to raise money. Birdathon '96 on April 27th will be our first fund raiser.

The search for suitable books and educational materials continues, with the hope that some articles can be obtained without charge. We're also continuing to look for an active, successful classroom program between the U.S. and a Spanish-speaking

country. This could save us time and money.

We've discovered that *Audubon Adventures* publishes a Spanish-language edition which is available at the usual rate of \$35.00 per classroom for 8 issues (32 copies + a teacher's guide for each issue). We would like to provide subscriptions to interested Panama classes.

We have delivered scopes and binoculars to Panama Audubon for distribution, as Miles has mentioned (*see cover story*). There is an on-going need for these items, so if you have spare optical equipment that's gathering dust, consider donating it to a worthy cause. Not only are we interested in seeing developed a core of Panamanian biologists who are committed to carrying on research and who can speak up on environmental issues, but we are hoping to generate enthusiasm for the natural world in both adults and children -- binoculars and scopes are vital in both of these efforts.

We're optimistic that eventually we can develop classroom-to-classroom exchanges that will bring together the students of Panama and California in a mutual understanding and respect for their environments and for the shared birdlife each area supports.

YOU CAN HELP!

Does your school district warehouse used science texts? Often, they are willing to give these to a worthy cause. We need texts in Spanish, but some in English may also be useful.

Do you have any local Panama contacts - friends or family who might be called for their knowledge of the Panama school system, or for other useful information?

Do you know any local teachers who are committed to environmental issues and would be overjoyed to participate in an educational program shared with a classroom in Panama?

Please call Jean Luken at (510) 530-4184 if you can help or have additional suggestions. Naturally we'd love to have you join PanCom -- call, or watch *The Gull* for announcements of future meetings.

Jean Luken

Panama: A Thanksgiving Treat

Last November, five members of GGAS traveled to Panama for a first birding experience in that gorgeous country. The nine-day trip over Thanksgiving was our first opportunity to meet Panama Auduboners and clarify mutual goals for education, fundraising, and conservation activities. Miles and Mary Ellen McKey and I as members of GGAS's Panama Committee (PanCom) were joined by five other Audubon members: Michael Healy and Kaori Fujitani from San Francisco, Charles Bragg from Santa Monica, and David and Judy Smith from North Carolina. This trip was a great success, and PanCom is now making plans for a return trip in February of 1997 to the province of Darien in eastern Panama (see details elsewhere in this issue).

This article and Charles Bragg's following piece are our attempts to share some of the pleasure of birding in the beautiful *Republica de Panama*. I have relied on field notes, *A Guide to the Birds of Panama*, warm memories, and correspondence with members of *Sociedad Audubon de Panama* to pull this together.

The Republic of Panama

Panama is a fifty-mile-wide tropical land bridge of verdant rainforests, marshes, jungles, and mountains that connects the great American continents and separates the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. A true human melting pot, Panama is a mix of Africans, Asians, Europeans, and North Americans. It is home to the Cuna, Choco and Guaymí peoples.

A birder's paradise, Panama is the conduit through which the polychrome birds of Central America must pass. To date over 900 species have been recorded from this land linking Costa Rica and Colombia. In spite of its natural beauty, Panama has not been exploited by the

commercial ecotourism industry. Its best birding areas are easily accessible, and the water is safe to drink. We found nearly 300 bird species in November and saw marmoset, capucin, howler, and spider monkeys, as well as coati-mundis, sloths, many butterflies, squadrons of army ants, and a couple of crocodiles.

Panama City and Soberania National Park

We arrived in Panama City Airport on the Pacific Ocean side on a Saturday afternoon and met Wilberto Martinez of Pesantcz Tours. An internationally-recognized expert on the birds of Panama, he and his daughter/assistant, Aileen, helped load our luggage as we boarded his van and traveled to the Executive Hotel for a two-night stay in downtown Panama City. It was hot and humid, as one expects

Hummingbirds included the Long-tailed Hermit, White-necked Jacobin, Purple-crowned Fairy, and White-vented Plumeleteer. There were White-tailed and Violaceous trogons and Blue-crowned and Rufous motmots, Jacana, and Squirrel Cuckoo. At the edge of a lagoon, Wilberto found the stoic Boat-billed Heron perched in the rain. Our first day in the field included an amazing array of species, including a caiman which swam toward us at Wilberto's call.

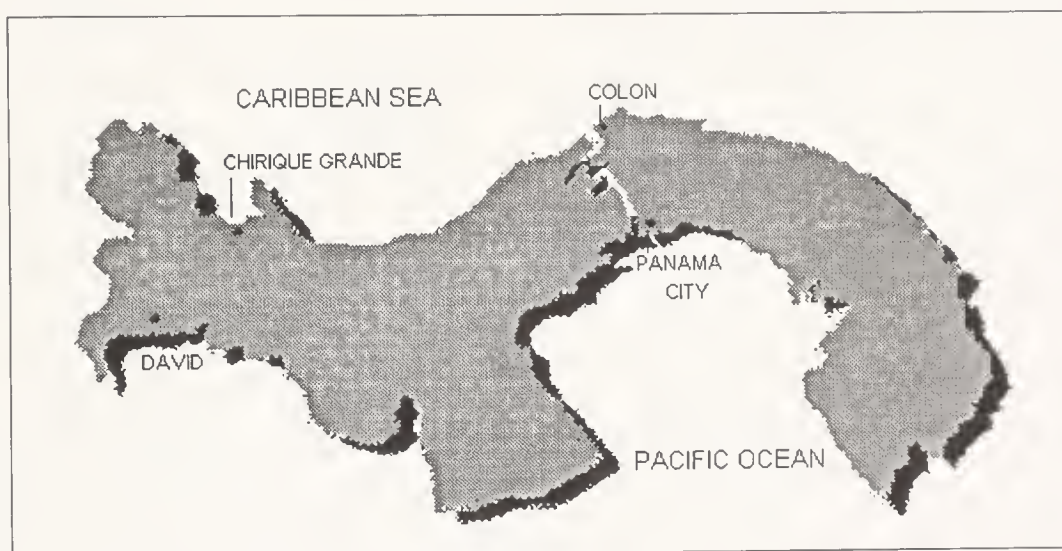
Sunday evening back at the hotel, we met with about 25 members of the Panama Audubon. We turned over to them several pairs of binoculars that had been donated as part of our binocular collection program. Norita Scott Pezet, president of Panama Audubon, and our own Miles McKey, PanCom founder, made brief presentations, and we all enjoyed getting acquainted.

Colon and the Achioté Road

The next morning we drove the Trans-Isthmian Highway to the Caribbean side for two days in the Colon area. We rose very early each morning and searched for birds along the Achioté Road and in the Gatun Lock area of the Panama Canal. We

crossed over the canal each day, and watched enormous ships being raised and lowered through the locks. In one spectacular afternoon, Wilberto found a Great Jacamar perched just over us. He mimicked the jacamar's call and caused it to fly back and forth several times as it looked for the intruder. It's a twelve-inch-long bird, brilliant metallic-green above and rich tawny-rufous below. Chuck Bragg was able to take videos of this beauty.

We walked the Tiger Trail through a dense jungle off Escobal Road looking for the "Ant Families"- antbirds, antpittas, antshrikes, antthrushes, antvireos, and antwrens. This is a large and confusing group of birds of various sizes and colors. Robert Ridgely says these birds are



in the tropics. Year around the temperature averages 80 degrees, and it rains regularly from May through November, with the dry season starting in December.

Early Sunday morning after a hearty breakfast, Wilberto drove us to the famous Pipeline Road in the heart of Soberania National Park, 45 minutes from Panama City. Rated as one of the most accessible tropical forests in the world, Soberania has recorded over 380 bird species. We walked the road and trails in several locations, meeting up with some new friends from Panama Audubon. We found Black Vultures everywhere, White, Roadside, and Broad-winged hawks, Chachalaca, wood-rail, Magnificent Frigatebird, and Brown-hooded and Red-lored Parrots.

exclusively neotropical, and that:

...the term 'antbird' is something of a misnomer as very few species are known to feed on ants; the name is derived from the habit of several species of following swarms of army ants and feeding on the insects and arthropods disturbed by them.

It turns out that most antbirds, according to Ridgely, don't even pay that much attention to the swarms, but feed generally from the forest floor and low-growing shrubs.

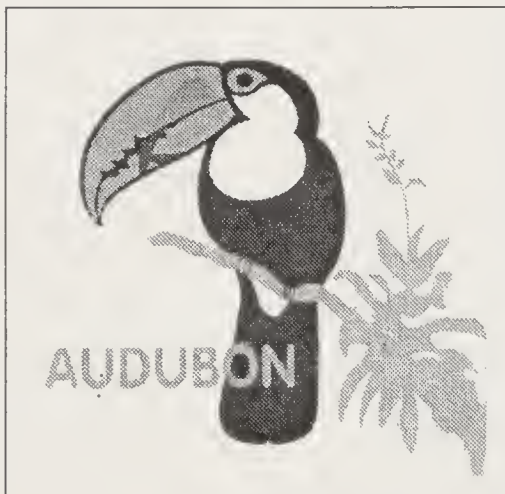
For me the highlight of our visit to Colon was walking a trail in the dark while owling to a cacophony of frog and grasshopper calls. We saw a Mottled Owl that perched next to the trail after Wilberto called it in. That was followed by a successful search for the Greater Potoo, which we found by shining spotlights along the roadsides while driving slowly through the forest. We also saw several varieties of puffbirds and more trogons in the Colon area.

Wilberto "Willy" Martinez is a wizard at finding and identifying by sight and song even the most elusive birds. I asked him one evening at the end of an especially productive day how he'd become so good at identification. He explained that as a boy he'd roamed widely in the woods and became an expert at finding birds and mimicking their songs. He grew up to appreciate their beauty, began showing them to others, and developed an active interest in conserving their habitats. I especially appreciated seeing the huge variety of beautiful tanagers he showed us throughout the trip. There were Blue Dacnis, Spangle-checked, Crimson-backed, Flame-colored, and Scarlet-rumped tanagers to name only a few of the most memorable.

The next morning we had to leave Colon and return to Panama City for a flight to David and our western destination in the Chiriqui Mountains where we would search for the Resplendent Quetzal.

Thanksgiving Day and the Chiriqui Mountains

This day started at 4:00 a.m. with a hearty breakfast at the Executive Hotel followed by a bus ride to the airport for our 6:30 a.m. flight to David. Willie and Aileen were there to meet us when we deplaned. We drove through the lowland savanna and agricultural regions, the western foothills, up to the Chiriqui highlands to the village of Cerro Punta at 7,000 feet.



We birded all along the highway as the temperature dropped and the jungle gave way to the slopes of the 11,000-foot Volcan Baru. This ancient cindercone is the highest point of the Chiriqui mountain range that extends west into Costa Rica. Many of the hillsides have

been cleared for vegetable farming that requires intensive methods on terraces.

After checking into the Cerro Punta Hotel, we drove a few miles out of town into a canyon, Cenderos los Quetzals, and walked up the road. Willie directed us off the trail into the forest where within minutes we saw three Resplendent Quetzals perched among the pine and avocado trees. A female and two males remained visible to us for several hours. The males appeared to be in contention for the territory, and pursued each other through the trees, gliding in breathtaking displays. Their backs are an iridescent blue-green that covers their wings and wraps around with feathers extending over the sides of the male's scarlet breast and the female's gray breast. The long, greenish tail feathers of the mature male blew in the breeze as he watched us from the top of his favorite avocado tree.

We walked away reluctantly late that afternoon down the trail to the bus as fog rolled into the canyon and curled through the trees on the surrounding volcanic hillsides. The sun was setting and glowed a rich yellow and pink against the forming mist so that a perfect rainbow

appeared arching across the canyon. We all started in disbelief at the glowing hillsides as the rainbow doubled briefly and then dissolved into dusk. It was a moment of visual bliss for many of us on that Thanksgiving Day, to have seen our first quetzals and this show of tropical nature's perfect beauty.

The next day we returned for more sightings of the quetzals and hiked up to the rim of the canyon seeing more birds along the way. The road we hiked was started by the Panama government to join Cerro Punta and Boquette on the other side of the volcano, but environmentalists led by Audubon were able to stop the road and further habitat destruction. The quetzals stay all year here, and, thanks to an avocado tree-planting project, there will be more of them in the future.

Our trip concluded on November 26 with a flight back to Panama City and on to Houston and home again. Plans are being made now for the return trip to Darien to see more tropical birds, especially the 60 species that exist only in the Darien National Park near Cana. Now is the time to make plans to join us,

Corinne Stefanick

The following article comes from Charles Bragg of Santa Monica Audubon, who, with David and Judy Smith of North Carolina, extended the Panama experience with guide Wilberto Martinez for two additional days after the GGAS birders flew home.

The Other Side of the Mountain

On Sunday, we four drove out of David towards Chiriqui Grande, on the Caribbean side, in a rented Toyota Tercel after saying goodbye to Golden Gate Auduboners at Tocumen Airport. It was raining tropically hard, and the drive was difficult, but we survived.

Chiriqui Grande was a pipeline construction town long ago and now is a major ferry port serving the north coast. We stayed at the Imperador, which was clean if spartan. In the morning I looked out the window and saw Black Vultures loping along like flocks of big black chickens. It was surreal.

Birding that day was the best of the trip. It was warm, and we were in the lowlands where most of the birds are. We saw about 86 species of which more than 50 were lifers. We got close-up looks at the Blue-headed and White-crowned parrots, Green Ibis, Scarlet-thighed Tanager, and the Crimson-collared Tanager. Is there no end to the colors of the tanagers?

The next day was better weather, but as is so often the case, good weather can mean No Birds. The Silvery-fronted Tapaculo called and answered the tape from six feet away, but was not seen, much to our disappointment. We went down a very muddy and steep forest trail after the White-crowned Manakin, and found a Black Guan who posed for us 50 feet up a tree. Then, while we stood listening to the forest, a bird party came through, and we had manakins coming out our ears.

At the end of the day we stopped at a tropical forest research station and went into its muddy woodsy glens. My running shoes turned chocolate brown, gaining about 3 pounds apiece, but we found Wedge-billed and Strong-billed woodcreepers, and the White-bellied Mountain-gem, a hummingbird Wilberto was very excited about. It was only his second sighting in Panama ever, and there were two of them mating.

In the mountains on the way back to David the clouds gathered for the afternoon shower and another birdparty traveled through. We had incredible looks at the Lance-tailed Manakin, previously seen only in ventral views up in the trees. The male has a scarlet cap and a sky-blue back blending into a jet-black body. No field guide could do it justice. And again, there were tanagers everywhere.

We waited for the sunset and watched the clouds gliding across the forested slopes below us. The birds were calling, but our trip was over and we had to go. Airplanes, airports, hotels, home again.

Will I go to Darien in 1997? I don't see how it can get any better for birders, but they it's the better half of Panama, so I'll be there.

Charles Bragg

A Word from Panama Audubon

The following letter was sent to GGAS President, Jan Andersen, by PAS President, Norita Scott-Pezet.

The Panama Audubon Society (PAS) successfully organized the International Bird Festival in Panama for the third consecutive year. The event took place during the 3-day weekend of October 20-22, 1995, and over 1,300 persons attended. Enclosed you will find a report on the various festival activities and the program of the festival. The festival featured lectures from distinguished scientists and expert bird watchers, including our invited guest, Dr. Daniel Evans, Director of the Point Reyes Bird



Observatory in California whose visit to Panama was sponsored by the Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS). Also featured were 19 field trips to sites around Panama City and the Panama Canal.

The festival was jointly sponsored by Bird Life International, headquartered in Cambridge, England, and is the first one of its kind in Panama. It provided at very reasonable prices, \$3 for adults and \$1 for children and students for the 3-day event, information on bird watching, conservation issues, and ecotourism. The PAS plans to continue celebrating this festival on an annual basis.

Your sponsorship of Dr. Evans to this activity was an excellent choice. His talk was attended by nearly 250 persons. He was a real hit with Panama Auduboners and the public in general. He told me he was very impressed with the popularity of the activity, the many things going on, and the interest of the people. He was supportive of our needs and came to understand our problems and handicaps. PAS is exceptionally grateful to GGAS for its outstanding contribution to the festival.

The Panama Audubon Society is among the most dedicated and serious conservation organizations in the Republic of Panama today. We recently presented a

proposal for the study of Important Bird Areas/Endemic Bird Areas in collaboration with Bird Life International. The two-year study will provide the scientific basis for the identification and protection of important bird areas in Panama. PAS also led a protest against the construction of a major highway through the legally protected Metropolitan Natural Park while other organizations stood by. Due largely to our efforts, the environmental impact studies relative to this road construction project have been held under serious scrutiny by a multitude of serious conservationists supported by different groups of the Panamanian society. Steve Margolin [past president of GGAS] has provided instrumental support to the PAS Conservation Committee. We are impressed by his style of getting information to the right people.

PAS has an active membership of over 300 members, a program of over 40 annual field trips, bird watching education, programs that aid children from nonaffluent areas by providing them with field guides and binoculars and instruction, and many other activities. Recently PAS published the first checklist of the Birds of Panama with the names of the birds in Spanish.

All these accomplishments are possible due to the work of a dedicated group of Auduboners in Panama and the support of friends like yourselves. Again, thanks for the excellent contributions of GGAS to the PAS.

*Norita Scott-Pezet, President
Panama Audubon Society*

Dan Evans (continued from Cover)

Considering population growth and the pressures to build roads or cut the remaining forests, Panama has many challenges ahead. Protecting the canal from deforestation and siltation can have major economic benefits. More importantly for all of us, a wealth of both resident and migratory avifauna depend on this thin isthmus that connects North and South America. Every effort must be made to protect it.

I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Golden Gate Audubon Society that covered all my travel costs to attend Panama's International Bird Festival. My warmest thanks to Steven Margolin and all the Golden Gate Audubon members.

January must surely have taken many by surprise. While many of the birds found last month remained, the discovery of new birds, including some northern Californian region and state rarities, along with the arrival of the first spring migrants, made for an exciting start to the year.

LOONS TO DUCKS

One **Yellow-Billed Loon** continued to be seen on Monterey Bay throughout the month (ADM). At Point Arena, MEN, the overwintering Laysan Albatross was seen through the end of the month. In addition, a good concentration of Laysan Albatross was present on Monterey Bay during a pelagic trip there on January 14, with between 16 and 20 individuals recorded. A trip the following week found 3 birds present, (ADM). Good numbers of Red-Necked Grebes continued along the coast with many reports, including one of up to 10 birds at Point Arena, MEN, on January 10 (RS).

Other trip highlights on Monterey Bay during the month included 4 shearwater species recorded January 14: 6 Flesh-footed, 12 Short-tailed, 13 Pink-footed and 5 Sooty shearwaters, (ADM); 2 Black-footed Albatross and 2 Black-vented Shearwater seen on January 21 (ADM). The only other report of Black-vented Shearwater was from Pigeon Point, SM, on January 19 (RSTh). Northern Fulmars, again this month, continued to be seen offshore in good numbers.

It was a very good month for swan sightings with good numbers and flocks of Tundras seen at many locations. The beginning of the month also saw a **Whooper Swan**, reported near Grimes, COL, on January 3 and 4. This is possibly the same bird which has been overwintering the last two years at the Klamath Basin Wildlife Refuge and is still one of only a handful of records for this species in the state. Also seen in the area at the same time was a "Bewick's Swan," the Eurasian sub-species of Tundra Swan; a

Trumpeter Swan was also present there on January 4.

Of the interesting duck sightings, Eurasian Wigeon reports included a high total of 7 birds at Bolinas Lagoon on January 20. The two Tufted Ducks at Sunnyvale, SCL, were last reported on January 1. Additional birds found included a female at Arrowhead Marsh, ALA, January 8 (DH); another, or possibly the same bird, at Lake Merritt, ALA, on January 14 (RMu,) and a male at Spreckels Lake, GGP, San Francisco, on January 14, which continued there through the end of the month. The Harlequin Duck remained at Monterey, MTY, while a pair was seen at the Fish Docks, PRNS, on January 19 (GMcC). Oldsquaws continued at many coastal and San Francisco Bay locations, while scattered reports also continued of small groups of Blue-winged Teal; the only Eurasian Green-winged Teal report came from Redwood City on January 15.

RAPTORS TO GULLS

Rough-legged Hawk and Ferruginous Hawk reports were again scarce during the month (and, indeed, throughout the winter) with only two reports of each from coastal locations. A total of 26 Swainson's Hawks, all dark-morph birds, were seen at the Holland Tract, CC, on January 26, and are known to be part of the group wintering in the Central Valley, (SG).

Rock Sandpipers continued to be reported at the North Jetty of Humboldt Bay, HUM, through January 15; a single bird was at Crescent City, DN, January 1, and another was seen off Pescadero Beach on January 15 (ADM). A small group of Pacific Golden Plovers were seen at Pigeon Point, SM, at the beginning of the month with up to 3 birds present there on January 3 and 4. Mountain Plovers continued in Yolo county and peaked at 200 birds on January 5 (FB).

Up to 40 Pomarine Jaegers were seen on Monterey Bay on January 14, with a high of 124 Black-legged Kittiwakes

recorded there the same day (ADM). Other notable gull sightings included four reports of single Glaucous Gulls from various coastal locations and a **Laughing Gull**, which was found at Marshall, MRN, on January 20, (EE). This bird continued to be seen at least through January 26 and in addition to being the first Marin County record of this species, is also one of only a dozen or less occurrences of this species in Northern California and one of the few winter records.

SAPSUCKERS TO SHRIKES

The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker continued to be seen at Ed Levin County Park, SM. The Eastern Phoebe at Bodega Bay, SON, was seen through at least Jan. 22; additional reports include single birds at the Carmel River Mouth, MTY, January 14, (RH); at Shady Oaks Park, SM, Jan 17, (this being the third year in a row for this species to over winter there); at Moonglow Dairy, MTY, on Jan 17, (SRo); and at Olema Marsh, MRN, Jan 20 (EE).

In San Francisco, the **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** continued to be seen until at least Jan. 21, while another turned up at the Moonglow Dairy, MTY, on Jan. 17, (SRo). The Vermilion Flycatcher at Arcata was last seen at the beginning of the month.

In addition to reports of single overwintering Barn Swallows earlier in the month, 3 birds present at Pescadero Marsh on January 15, (ADM) seen with Tree and Violet-green swallows may have been overwintering birds also or, more probably, early migrants.

A Northern Shrike was at Doris, SIS, on January 14 (PJM), the only report for the month.

HUMMINGBIRDS TO TANAGERS

In Santa Rosa, SON, a **Broad-billed Hummingbird** was observed coming to a feeder on January 14 (RMu). Unfortunately this bird was not seen on subsequent days. This species is another

exceptional rarity in Northern California with only 6 or 7 accepted records to date, and is one of few wintering records in the state. The first reported Allen's Hummingbird of the spring came from Lobitas Creek, SM, on Jan. 19 (RST). Their numbers, however, still remain low for this time of year and many observers have yet to catch up with their first of the spring season.

This month's rundown of interesting and unusual warblers include: 2 Tennessee Warblers, one at Half Moon Bay, SM, January 3, and another in Humboldt, January 21, (RT); up to 3 Yellow Warblers, 3 Nashville, 1 Black-throated Gray, and 2 Palm Warblers (down from the 22 of last month), and 2 lingering Black-and-white Warblers. At Half Moon Bay, SM, the Lucy's Warblers continued, while another was at Lake Merced, SF, on January 28 (ASH). This bird is probably the same one which over-wintered in this same location in 1995. A Yellow-throated Warbler, of the white-lored race, was found at Lolita, HUM, on January 22 (RL), and is one of the few wintering records for Northern California. The **Worm-eating Warbler** in Golden Gate Park, SF, remained through January 21, and continued to elude many who attempted to see it, myself included. The male Hooded Warbler at Mallard Lake, GGP, SF, was last reported on January 9. A Prairie Warbler turned up on January 14 at the Carmel River Mouth, MTY (RH), while a Chestnut-sided Warbler was reported there on January 21 (DSp). A Northern Waterthrush was also seen there the previous day.

The Summer Tanager continued in Palo Alto, SCL, through the month,

SPARROWS TO BLACKBIRDS

The American Tree Sparrow in Arcata, HUM, was last reported on January 8, while another was seen in Pescadero, SM, on January 15, (BM). Three new Harris's Sparrows were found during the month: at Tule Lake NWR, SIS, January 3; at Danville, CC, at least through January 28; and at Windsor, SON, on January 19. Single reports of Sharp-tailed Sparrows came from Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, on January 19 and 20, and from the Carmel River mouth, MTY, on January 20 (LE).

One Chestnut-collared Longspur was seen at the summit of Sierra Road, SCL, on January 21 (ALE).

The **Rustic Bunting** near Hoopa, HUM, also continued to be seen throughout the month allowing many the opportunity to go and see it. A second visit (or first, even, for some) may be appropriate if this bird remains and molts into its beautiful alternate plumage,

A Rusty Blackbird was found at the Phipps Ranch, Pescadero, on January 8 (RST) and continued to be seen up until the end of the month.

Finally, a report of another extreme Northern California rarity, rarer still in winter, is that of a Common Grackle found in a blackbird flock at Point Arena, MEN, on January 6 (RS), a fitting end to this month's column.

The monthly observation column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box or to the author. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses". In general, birds in boldface are very rare in our region, geographically or seasonally. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959 for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC secretary at the address above.

OBSERVERS: Richard Ackley, Doug Aguiard, Andrew Birch, Les Chibana, Rich Cimino, Luke Cole, Hugh Cotter, Al DeMartini, David DeSante, Elizabeth Dickey, Hugh Dingle, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Alan M. Eisner, Elias Elias, Mike Feighner, George Finger, Kevin Guse, Steve Glover, Edward G. Greaves, Betty Gross, Denise Hamilton, Rob Hamilton, Keith Hansen, Hugh Harvey, Kevin Hints, David Hoffman, Alan S. Hopkins, Joel Hurr, Richard Jeffers, Al Jaramillo, Clay Kohler, Bill Lenarz, Leslie Lieurance, Cindy Lieurance, Ron LeValley, Mike Mammoser, Guy McCaskie, David McIntyre, John McKean, Bert McKee, Kevin McKerrigan, Peter J. Metropolis, Steve Metze, Joseph Morlan, Mike Morris, Ann Moser, Dan P. Murphy, Roger Muscat, Dan Nelson, David Nelson, Todd Newberry, John Osner, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Marjorie Plant, Roy Poucher, David Powell, Bill Principe, David Quaddy, Mark Razon, Bob Reiling, Jean M. Richmond, Mike Rogers, Steve Rottenborn, Steve Rovell, Barry Sauppe, Debra L. Shearwater, Daniel Singer, Don Schmoldt, Dick Spight, Rich Stallcup, John Sterling, Emilie Strauss, Sherman Sutter, Ed Tandelfino, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Forest Tomlinson, Steve Walsh, Natalie White

Data thanks to the Northern California Bird Box.

TRAVEL ADVISORY - PARADISE FOUND

We would like to remind our members that GGAS and Park East Tours have planned a delightful 14-day excursion to Ecuador and Galapagos Islands for November 11-24, 1996, returning just in time to enjoy Thanksgiving with family and friends and regale them with your adventures in paradise.

I really do feel that Galapagos has all the essential ingredients to be called paradise, substituting lumbering land tortoises for palm trees, of course. The climate is equatorial, sunny and hot with moderating cool ocean breezes. Fine white-sand beaches meet that indescribably blue-green water which teems with fish and marine mammals, some of which are hauled out on those fine white beaches for easy viewing and photographing. Further, the pace is leisurely, with time for naps and good food in between jaunts to visit sights and viewing areas on the islands. Those island visits will put you in close proximity to abundant and utterly fascinating birds - Blue-footed and Masked boobies, Waved Albatross, frigatebirds and more.

Your home in the Galapagos will be aboard a 110-foot motor yacht with a maximum of twenty passengers. The ship travels at night among the islands ensuring ample time at each site for walks, small- launch excursions and sometimes snorkeling during the day.

After the 8-day cruise, we will continue on to Ecuador's highlands and the Cotopaxi Volcano. We'll make a trip to a lush tropical forest where over 200 bird species have been recorded; and, lastly, we'll visit the picturesque indian market town, Otavalo, set against rugged volcanic mountains. The trip will take us through Ecuador's full range of ecological zones.

We urge you to join us in Galapagos and Ecuador - you deserve it! Call GGAS, 510-843-2222, or Barbara Rivenes, 415-388-4552, for a detailed brochure and costs of the trip.

Barbara Rivenes

1995 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

OAK	SF	SPECIES
18	53	Red-throated Loon
2	23	Pacific Loon
71	25	Common Loon
0	300	loon, sp.
214	151	Pied-billed Grebe
182	28	Horned Grebe
1	1	Red-necked Grebe
31	77	Eared Grebe
466	399	Western Grebe
177	37	Clark's Grebe
360	689	<i>Aechmophorus</i> , sp.
1	0	American White Pelican
143	90	Brown Pelican
2256	190	Double-crested Cormorant
76	52	Brandt's Cormorant
41	15	Pelagic Cormorant
0	1	American Bittern
45	26	Great Blue Heron
80	23	Great Egret
159	37	Snowy Egret
1	0	Cattle Egret
3	1	Green Heron
93	57	Black-crowned Night Heron
0	6	Tundra Swan
22	0	Greater White-fronted Goose
0	1	Snow Goose
0	1	Brant
1558	39	Canada Goose
6	1	Canada Goose (small forms)
6	3	Wood Duck
1	0	Green-winged Teal (Eur.)
165	0	Green-winged Teal (Am.)
1175	841	Mallard
0	94	Mallard hybrid
149	0	Northern Pintail
2	0	Blue-winged Teal
65	1	Cinnamon Teal
241	9	Northern Shoveler
182	35	Gadwall
2	0	Eurasian Wigeon
799	239	American Wigeon
309	58	Canvasback
85	0	Redhead
216	45	Ring-necked Duck
3432	94	Greater Scaup
1299	24	Lesser Scaup
6506	525	scaup, sp.
1	1	Oldsquaw
0	130	Black Scoter
18134	8438	Surf Scoter
15	348	White-winged Scoter
0	503	scoter, sp.
799	68	Common Goldeneye
71	2	Barrow's Goldeneye
2543	777	Bufflehead
3	1	Hooded Merganser
15	0	Common Merganser
37	19	Red-breasted Merganser

OAK	SF	SPECIES
5669	1165	Ruddy Duck
0	4845	duck, sp.
131	15	Turkey Vulture
9	3	Osprey
11	0	White-tailed Kite
23	14	Northern Harrier
26	15	Sharp-shinned Hawk
23	15	Cooper's Hawk
3	3	<i>Accipiter</i> , sp.
17	33	Red-shouldered Hawk
169	104	Red-tailed Hawk
2	0	<i>Buteo</i> , sp.
5	0	Golden Eagle
60	45	American Kestrel
2	4	Merlin
1	4	Peregrine Falcon
161	131	California Quail
5	7	Clapper Rail
2	3	Virginia Rail
3	6	Sora
1	0	Common Moorhen
3468	1440	American Coot
682	540	Black-bellied Plover
0	11	Snowy Plover
45	60	Semipalmated Plover
171	38	Killdeer
2	8	Black Oystercatcher
121	12	Black-necked Stilt
1128	160	American Avocet
31	1	Greater Yellowlegs
1	0	yellowlegs, sp.
1260	129	Willet
0	4	Wandering Tattler
19	10	Spotted Sandpiper
15	20	Whimbrel
113	16	Long-billed Curlew
667	14	Marbled Godwit
7	34	Ruddy Turnstone
50	40	Black Turnstone
0	44	Surfbird
4	0	Red Knot
355	462	Sanderling
5371	1941	Western Sandpiper
273	113	Least Sandpiper
3348	711	Dunlin
2610	360	peep, sp.
200	0	sandpiper, sp.
209	3	Short-billed Dowitcher
21	0	Long-billed Dowitcher
499	256	dowitcher, sp.
24	10	Common Snipe
2	2	Red Phalarope
6	2	Bonaparte's Gull
1	38	Heermann's Gull
1481	1442	Mew Gull
1568	374	Ring-billed Gull
429	817	California Gull
119	65	Herring Gull
1	4	Thayer's Gull
942	3498	Western Gull
17	56	Western x Glaucous-winged Gull

OAK	SF	SPECIES
181	149	Glaucous-winged Gull
0	3620	white-winged gull, sp.
1108	0	gull, sp.
91	0	Forster's Tern
0	2	Common Murre
1644	2811	Rock Dove
102	108	Band-tailed Pigeon
914	636	Mourning Dove
2	1	Barn Owl
8	0	Western Screech Owl
56	3	Great Horned Owl
7	0	Burrowing Owl
1	0	Northern Saw-whet Owl
18	0	White-throated Swift
553	393	Anna's Hummingbird
1	0	<i>Selasphorus</i> , sp.
14	9	Belted Kingfisher
17	0	Acorn Woodpecker
16	3	Red-breasted Sapsucker
67	0	Nuttall's Woodpecker
38	29	Downy Woodpecker
9	2	Hairy Woodpecker
3	0	Northern (yel.-sh.) Flicker
226	148	Northern (red-sh.) Flicker
44	0	Northern Flicker
102	76	Black Phoebe
7	4	Say's Phoebe
10	7	Horned Lark
0	1	No. Rough-winged Swallow
309	10	Steller's Jay
485	315	Scrub Jay
144	199	American Crow
49	134	Common Raven
680	346	Chestnut-backed Chickadee
75	0	Plain Titmouse
1249	573	Bushtit
103	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch
24	0	White-breasted Nuthatch
38	423	Pygmy Nuthatch
75	51	Brown Creeper
93	50	Bewick's Wren
2	2	House Wren
28	67	Winter Wren
5	50	Marsh Wren
212	138	Golden-crowned Kinglet
769	445	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
162	0	Western Bluebird
92	132	Hermit Thrush
1572	955	American Robin
29	0	Varied Thrush
192	49	Wrentit
38	25	Northern Mockingbird
25	10	California Thrasher
92	4	American Pipit
680	92	Cedar Waxwing
9	0	Loggerhead Shrike
2423	3310	European Starling
4	27	Hutton's Vireo
10	38	Orange-crowned Warbler
0	3	Nashville Warbler
0	1	Yellow Warbler

OAK	SF	SPECIES
31	223	Yellow-rumped (Myr.) Warbler
407	395	Yellow-rumped (Aud.) Warbler
1114	1844	Yellow-rumped Warbler
87	196	Townsend's Warbler
0	1	Hermit Warbler
1	1	Black and White Warbler
0	1	MacGillivray's Warbler
5	35	Common Yellowthroat
0	1	Hooded Warbler
1	0	Wilson's Warbler
205	23	Rufous-sided Towhee
504	152	California Towhee
13	0	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
70	25	Savannah Sparrow
227	236	Fox Sparrow
234	182	Song Sparrow
15	16	Lincoln's Sparrow
8	11	White-throated Sparrow
1078	712	Golden-crowned Sparrow
1076	1400	White-crowned Sparrow
0	1	Harris's Sparrow
5	0	Dark-eyed (Slate-col.) Junco
1414	268	Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco
723	645	Red-winged Blackbird
26	10	Tricolored Blackbird
338	415	Western Meadowlark
940	2389	Brewer's Blackbird
76	35	Brown-headed Cowbird
0	50	blackbird, sp.
41	14	Purple Finch
1184	1170	House Finch
15	0	Red Crossbill
148	16	Pine Siskin
125	24	Lesser Goldfinch
338	2	American Goldfinch
193	264	House Sparrow
99416	59822	Individuals
177	168	Species
1	1	Hybrids
159	97	Observers in the Field
10	3	Observers at Feeders
57	25	Parties
261.3	130.5	Hours on Foot
33.25	11.75	Hours by Car
9.5	0	Hours by Boat
1.5	0	Hours by Canoe
305.6	142.3	Total Party Hours
161.8	86.5	Miles on Foot
316.8	205	Miles by Car
33	0	Miles by Boat
1.5	0	Miles by Canoe
513.1	291.5	Total Party Miles
23	2	Feeder Hours
10.5	6.5	Owling Hours
15.5	11	Owling Miles

OAKLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1995

After a nasty storm hit northern California earlier in the month, we weren't sure what to expect when we went out to count birds on December 17. What we found was good weather (Oakland always comes through!), but not many birds. Our total of 99416 individuals was the second lowest in the last twenty years, and 26000 fewer birds than in 1994. We had especially low numbers of Canvasback, Sanderling, Least Sandpiper, Bonaparte's Gull, Mourning Dove, Scrub Jay, Northern Mockingbird, California Towhee, White-crowned Sparrow, Lesser Goldfinch, and House Sparrow. Conversely, we had high numbers of Clark's Grebe, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Mew Gull. At 177, our species count was slightly higher than average.

Highlights included the following unusual birds: Pacific Loons at Alameda and Lake Merritt, Red-necked Grebe in Alameda, Red Phalaropes at Point Isabel and San Leandro Bay, Common Moorhen at Bay Farm Island, Black and White Warbler at Lake Merritt, Wilson's Warbler in Albany, and Red Crossbills in Redwood Park. To put on a list of birds seen in unexpected places, we received reports that the Orinda group observed 21 Brown Pelicans, and the crew on the South Boat spied a Burrowing Owl on the seawall at the Alameda Naval Air Station!

169 people counted birds for the 1995 CBC. Several others volunteered in the GGAS office and at the count dinner. Thanks to each of you for your part it making it all happen.



GGAS/Panama Committee

present

BIRDATHON '96

an insane but rational fund-raiser

Saturday, April 27

form teams
gather pledges
see birds ... frantically
collect money
-or-
pledge faithfully
pay up promptly

*an event to benefit
National Audubon's
and
Golden Gate Audubon's
educational programs
and
Panama Committee activities.*

Further details in the April *Gull*

News from Around the Bay

Audubon Canyon Ranch

Broaden your horizons by further involvement in special ACR activities. We bring to your attention these unique opportunities:

Are you looking for an opportunity to work with wildlife in the field? Are you interested in marine mammals, especially Harbor Seals? Do you enjoy collecting data or acting as a docent educator with the public? If this sounds "up your alley" then contact Mary Ellen King with the ACR Harbor Seal Study.

Each Spring (March - June) since 1991, the ACR Harbor Seal Study has collected data on the seals' reproductive success and on disturbances by humans to Harbor Seals in Tomales Bay. This work will continue in 1996 at Tom's Point. Also, for the first time, in Spring '96, a volunteer program, coordinated by Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, will be working with the public to safe-guard and educate about Harbor Seals using tidal-mud flats at the north end of Tomales Bay.

Volunteers are needed to commit to an orientation training and volunteer on weekends and weekdays at low tide periods for several hours. Please call Mary Ellen at (707) 537-1546 for more information. Leave your name, address and contact phone number(s) to receive information and updates.

ACR Public Season begins on Saturday, March 16 and ends on Sunday, July 14, 1996. We are open Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Have you signed up for your opportunity to act as HOST for a day? Though each chapter has specific dates to host during Bolinas Lagoon Preserve's (BLP) public season, a volunteer may sign up for any day. If the date is outside your chapter's schedule, call the BLP office (415) 868-9244. You might even decide to host during different times of the season to see all the stages of nesting - from nest building to fledging.

Are you new to hosting? What is the procedure? What can you expect from your day? Sign up with your chapter coordinator. Then on your chosen day, join Ray Peterson at 9:00 at BLP for a morning walk and the PreAmble Orientation at 9:30. Bring a friend or family member so during the break you can hike a trail. There will be an end-of-season barbecue to honor those individuals who host.

You are invited to Bouverie Preserve to join in the Guided Nature Walks: March 2, March 16, April 6, April 20, May 4, or May 25. It is necessary to make a reservation as the number of people on each hike is limited. To make a reservation, call (707) 938-4554 no earlier than the beginning of the month prior to the walk. Please note that no more than six (6) reservations may be made by one caller: This program is geared toward individuals rather than organizations. Saturday, May 18, is set aside for the Audubon Societies, but also requires reservations.

Thirty three trainees joined the ranks of "docent" at Bouverie Preserve in February. They completed their 22-week training course and are eager to guide the school children on hikes and visit them in the classroom. Training at BLP will commence in September. If you are interested and need more information please call: Cis Donahue (415) 488-0337.

Mary Engebret

Audubon Art at the DeYoung

An exhibition of 94 selected original watercolors by John James Audubon, along with 156 paintings from Andrew Grayson's *Birds of the Pacific Slope*, and a copy of Audubon's Elephant Folio will be on display at the DeYoung Museum in Golden Gate Park, SF, until April 14. Seldom shown because of their sensitivity to light, these paintings are a rare treat for any one who treasures the work of Audubon and other painters of wildlife.

Global Warming at the Oakland Museum

A large traveling exhibition, "Global Warming: Understanding the Forecast," is on display in the Great Hall at the Oakland Museum through April 14.

Richard Ives on Tigers

Richard Ives, a former member of Golden Gate Audubon, who has been living abroad for a number of years, is the author of a book entitled *Of Tigers and Men*, published by Doubleday on February 16. Richard will be in the Bay Area in March. He will be reading from his book and signing copies at A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books, 601 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, on Wednesday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m., and at Easygoing Travel Shop and Bookstore, 1385 Shattuck Ave., corner of Rose, Berkeley, on Thursday, March 14, at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

Feather River College

Feather River College, Plumas County, announces its Sierra Seniors program for 1996. Seniors 55 years and up will stay in apartments on the campus, eat in the college dining hall, and attend classes and field trips on the following subjects: Birding in the Sierra Nevada, Sierra Spring Wild Flowers and Let's Talk About Jazz.

This year's Sierra Seniors Program will be held June 16 to 22. Total cost is \$400.00 and includes meals, lodging, classes, field trips, and round-trip bus transportation from the Bay Area.

The birds will be breeding and beginning to build nests, the spring wild flowers will be at their peak. Visits to a number of habitats, supplemented by slides, lectures and films, will provide an enjoyable and varied experience for everyone.

For additional information and a brochure, call Eleanor Schuller, program coordinator, at (510) 530-1128.

Field Trips Calendar

Saturday, March 9

Birds of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park

Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the arboretum (near Ninth Ave. and Lincoln Way). On this morning trip we will be looking for spring birds that are attracted to the arboretum's varied habitat. Beginners (and all others) welcome. Leader: Alan Ridley (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, March 13

Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon

Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, & Jean-Marie Spoelman. For details of this trip see *The Gull* for February.

Saturday, March 16

San Francisco Bird Blitz

In this annual blitz we expect to tally over 100 different species within the city limits. This year's mad dash, hoping to exceed all previous records, will begin at 7 a.m. sharp. Meet at the north end of Van Ness Ave. (past North Point, the last cross street) at the foot of Municipal Pier. From there we will caravan to other sites including Golden Gate Park, Sutro Baths, Lake Merced and Candlestick Point. Bring lunch and liquids. we will bird until dusk, then adjourn to a nearby restaurant where we will recap the day's observations, and, for a minimal cost, we can avoid going home to cook dinner. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983.

Sunday, March 17

Briones Reservoir, EBMUD Watershed

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Bear Creek Staging Area. Take Hwy. 24 east and exit on the Orinda turnoff. Turn left and go back under the freeway on Camino Pablo. Continue northwest about two miles to Bear Creek Rd. Turn right and drive about 4.25 miles to the Bear Creek Staging Area on the left, just beyond Happy Valley Rd. (If you see the Briones Regional Park entrance - you've gone too far. Go back .25 mi.) An alternate route from Berkeley area: cross through Tilden Regional Park on Wildcat Canyon Rd. and continue across San Pablo Dam Rd. onto Bear Creek Rd. 4.25 miles to the staging area. We will be looking for wintering birds of the brushland, early migrants, and waterfowl. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510) 523-7108 (*)

Saturday, March 23

Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

Meet at 10 a.m. at Audubon Center in the Wildlife Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Rd. in Tiburon. From Hwy. 101 take the Belvedere/Tiburon exit; go east and turn right at the third traffic light, Greenwood Cove Rd., then take an immediate left. At 10 a.m. we will enjoy a 45-minute slide show in the classroom, then from 11 to 12 we will look for birds along the trail and along Richardson Bay shoreline, followed by a brief tour of the historic Lyford House - always a trip highlight. After lunch we will carpool to the Corte Madera shoreline for more waterfowl. Trip will end about 2:30. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Beginners welcome. Leader: Ranger, Bill Bixby (415) 388-2524. (*)

Sunday, March 24

Sunol Regional Park

Meet at 8:30 a.m. inside the park entrance at the parking lot on the left. Take I-680 south, turn off at Calaveras Rd. (the freeway sign is marked: Calaveras Rd., Dumbarton Bridge, Calif. 84). Go south (left) and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park, about five miles. Bring lunch and liquids. (Park regulations prohibit alcoholic beverages.) We should see Golden Eagles, a variety of winter residents and early spring migrants. This trip is also good for wildflowers. Leaders: Ron Lindeman (510) 521-2324 and Leora Feeney.

Sunday, March 31

Bodega Bay

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Intersection of Hwy. 1 and East Shore Rd. (one-half mile north of Dickmann's Bay Store). We will bird for spring migrants in Bodega Harbor and Bodega Head, observing waterfowl and shorebirds in their spring plumage. Bring lunch and liquids.

If you arrive Friday, lodging is available at the Best Western Motel (707) 875-3525, and the Bodega Court Inn (707) 875-2217. There are nice campsites at the Dune's State Park (\$) just north of our meeting place, but plan to get there early to be sure of getting a spot, or call Ticketron to reserve one. Leader: Nancy Conzett (707) 875-2231, Bodega Bay. (*)

Sunday, April 7 (Easter)

Point Reyes National Seashore

Meet at 8 a.m. (Daylight Savings Time) at the Bovine Bakery on Rt. 1 in downtown Pt. Reyes Station, two miles north of Olema. We will concentrate on shorebird identification at Abbott's Lagoon. Bring a scope if you have one, lunch and liquids, and wear comfortable walking shoes. We will adjourn soon after lunch. Heavy rain cancels. (If in doubt, call.) Leaders: Lina Jane Prairie and Neil Whitehouse (510) 235-2902. (*)

(Lina could not be persuaded to hide Easter eggs, but she does promise to keep a sharp eye out for the bunny.)

Wednesday, April 10

Mini-trip to Sunol Regional Park

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Ranger station parking lot inside the park. Take Hwy. 680 south to about eight miles beyond the intersection of Hwy. 580. Turn off at Calaveras Rd.; go left and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park. We may see Lark Sparrows, Golden Eagles, and Northern Orioles plus resident birds of the area. Bring lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman. \$ (*)

Sunday, April 14

Bothe-Napa Valley State Park

Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot. This is a particularly beautiful park in the spring, with migrating warblers and vireos, Winter Wrens, and, if we're lucky, Pileated Woodpeckers (several last year). We will walk about four to five miles and bird mostly by ear.

continued on Back Page.

March Meeting: When is a Migration not a Migration -- A Decade of Raptor Study at the Golden Gate Randall Junior Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco Thursday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.

Annually, from August through December, tens of thousands of hawks, falcons, eagles, harriers, kites, osprey, and vultures are visible travelling over the Marin Headlands in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area -- the largest concentration of raptors in the Pacific states.



Since 1985, hundreds of volunteers at the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) have studied this fall "migration" of birds of prey in cooperation with the National Park Service. Studying the annual passage, at first simply by counting every fly-over raptor and trapping, banding and releasing a small number of birds, and more recently using radiotelemetry, they've found that some Golden Gate raptors move counter to the classical "go-south-in-the-fall" migration. This challenges the notion of a discrete Pacific Flyway for birds of prey, and raises the question -- what guides the movements of Pacific raptors?

Allen Fish, well-known to many GGAS members, has directed the GGRO, a project of the Golden Gate National Park Association, since its inception. In the past decade, more than a thousand volunteers have contributed to the GGRO, possibly the most community-involved wildlife conservation project in the country. Join Allen for an evening of spectacular slides and stories, and an unfolding of the mysteries of the Golden Gate hawk flight.

Field Trip Calendar (cont. from page)

From the East Bay: drive north on I-80 beyond Vallejo and take the Napa exit. Follow Hwy. 29 to St. Helena. The entrance to the park is on the left just past the Ole Bale mill north of St. Helena. From the West Bay: take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 37 in Novato; go east to the junction with Hwy. 121; turn left and continue on 121 until it joins Hwy. 29 near Napa, then continue north on 29 to the Park. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels trip. Please carpool if possible. Leader: Peter Allen (415) 892-8063. \$ (*)

Saturday, April 20

Mines Rd., Livermore

Leader: George Bing (510) 443-5868. See April *Gull* for details.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (*). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a trip leader, call Russ Wilson, (510) 524-2399.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Ave., Ste. G
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CALIFORNIA ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES
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Observations: Hugh Cotter

(415) 752-6776

Librarian: Janet Wessel (510) 939-2499

Program Coordinator/Office Manager:

Arthur Feinstein (510) 843-2222

Northern California Bird Box

(510) 524-5592

5 species of loon have been seen in California

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Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue
Suite G
Berkeley, California 94702
Phone: (510) 843-2222
Fax: (510) 843-5351

Office Hours:
Tues.- Fri. 9-12, 1-4